



**Advisory Announcement**  
*For Immediate Release: January 6, 2022*

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**2021/2022 SOUTHEAST ALASKA GOLDEN KING CRAB COMMERCIAL FISHERY**

The 2021/2022 commercial golden king crab fishery in Southeast Alaska (Registration Area A) will open concurrently with the commercial Tanner crab fishery at 12:00 noon on **Friday, February 11, 2022**.

**Guideline Harvest Levels**

The Registration Area A guideline harvest level (GHL) for this season is 75,300 pounds. Management area specific GHLs set within the guideline harvest ranges (GHRs) are as follows:

Management Area	GHR	2021/2022 GHL
Northern	0–145,000	<b>CLOSED</b>
Icy Strait	0–55,000	8,250
North Stephens Passage	0–25,000	18,000
East Central	0–225,000	12,050
Mid-Chatham Strait	0–150,000	7,500
Lower Chatham Strait	0–50,000	7,500
Southern	0–25,000	22,000
<b>Registration Area A total</b>	<b>0–675,000</b>	<b>75,300</b>

The Northern management area will be closed for the 2021/2022 season in response to continued and historically low fishery performance and concern for the long-term reproductive potential of golden king crab. Golden king crab are vulnerable to overexploitation at low population levels given their slow growth and late maturation. In prior seasons for areas experiencing poor performance, the department has continued to implement preseason reductions in GHLs and inseason closure of management areas before harvest has reached GHLs. However, fishery performance has continued to decline and has reached historical lows and appears to be longer in duration than that experienced during the 1990s collapse, warranting further management action to allow for the rebuilding of golden king crab stocks and to ensure sustainable fisheries in the future.

Each management area will be managed inseason and closed by emergency order once the individual management area GHLs are reached or are expected to soon be reached. The department will evaluate fishery performance inseason according to the decision rules in a harvest strategy. Fishery performance will be assessed biweekly and/or with a minimum requirement of 500 pot lifts before taking management action. In management areas where fishery performance indicates a stock health concern, the department may close prior to reaching the GHL. The first inseason analyses of harvest tickets, logbooks, and port sampling data will be reviewed in early March. Any subsequent fishery area closures will be announced in March, and although the department will provide as much advance warning as possible, closures may occur on short notice.

Maps showing management area boundaries for golden king crab are included for reference only in this advisory announcement (Figures 1 & 2). Please refer to 5 AAC 34.107 for descriptions of the golden king crab fishing areas in

Registration Area A in the 2020–2021 Statewide King and Tanner Crab Commercial Fishing Regulations booklet found in area offices. Regulations can also be viewed online:

<http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/aac.asp#5.34>

### **Closed Waters**

The commercial fishery will be closed in the following management area:

- Northern Area [5 AAC 34.107(a)]: all waters of Section 11-A, Section 13-C, and Section 13-A in Peril Strait east of Point Kakul at 57°21.83' N lat, 135°41.42' W long, and all waters of Districts 12 and 15.

The seven golden king crab management areas do not encompass all waters of Registration Area A. Please refer to 5 AAC 34.107 for descriptions of the golden king crab management areas in Registration Area A and 5 AAC 34.150(b) for descriptions of closed waters within Registration Area A. Although waters of District 14 in Glacier Bay north of the latitude of Point Gustavus are listed in 5 AAC 34.107(b) as part of the Icy Strait golden king crab area, federal regulation prohibits commercial fishing for king crabs in this area. For specific information on commercial fishing in waters of Glacier Bay National Park contact the National Park Service at (907) 697-2230.

### **Nonretention of Blue King Crab**

Qualifying permit holders with current registration in golden king crab and Tanner crab fisheries **will not be allowed to retain blue king crab in the 2021/2022 golden king crab and Tanner crab fisheries** [5 AAC 34.110(e)] from areas described as blue king crab fishing areas [5 AAC 34.108]. Based on results from the red and blue king crab stock assessment surveys, along with previous commercial catch data, blue king crab are believed to be in poor health and will be closed by emergency order.

### **Registration**

As announced in a previous advisory announcement, the registration deadline for the 2021/2022 commercial golden king crab fishery is Wednesday, January 12, 2022. All commercial fishermen registering for the 2021/2022 commercial golden king crab fishery after January 12, 2022, are required to pay a \$45.00 late fee [A.S. 16.05.065]. Simultaneous, though separate, registrations are allowed for golden king and Tanner crab (see Simultaneous Registration Regulations section in this advisory announcement). Processors are reminded that registration for tenders is required.

Commercial fishermen may register and obtain logbook packets, buoy tags, and other fishery information in the Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Petersburg, and Haines area offices. The king crab vessel registration year [5 AAC 34.020(b)] is June 28–June 27. Permit holders wishing to fish in open golden king crab management areas after June 27, 2022, will need to re-register with the department.

Buoy tags are mandatory for all commercial golden king crab gear and are available in most Southeast area offices for \$1.25 each. Buoy tag placement requirements are in regulation [5 AAC 34.051(b)]. Replacement tags are available at area offices upon receipt of a completed tag replacement affidavit. All missing tag numbers must be provided on the affidavit form before replacements can be issued [5 AAC 34.126(a)]. The completed affidavit form must be signed by the permit holder and a crewmember. All purchased buoy tags are nonrefundable.

### **Simultaneous Registration Regulations**

While the Tanner crab fishery is open, a golden king crab fisherman who is also registered for the Tanner crab fishery may use a maximum of 80 pots [5 AAC 34.125(b)(3)]. Twenty-four hours after the Tanner crab season closes regionwide in Registration Area A [5 AAC 35.020(k)], or after a fisherman, or his agent, has unregistered from the Tanner crab fishery, fishermen already registered for the golden king crab fishery may purchase an additional 20 tags in order to fish the maximum of 100 pots for golden king crab.

Regulations regarding permit holders with simultaneous registration in golden king crab and Tanner crab fisheries [5 AAC 34.109; 5 AAC 35.106] state that before fishing for golden king crab in a portion of Registration Area A that is closed to Tanner crab fishing, a vessel must have all Tanner crab removed from the vessel, must unregister to fish for Tanner crab by signature of the vessel owner, agent, or permit holder and a department representative, and that once a permit has been unregistered for Tanner crab, Tanner crab may not be retained or sold from that vessel. **Until a permit holder**

**simultaneously registered for the golden king crab and Tanner crab fisheries unloads all Tanner crab, and unregisters to fish for Tanner crab, they may not have gear in fishing condition in a portion of Registration Area A that is closed to Tanner crab fishing.** Likewise, vessels registered only for golden king crab that desire to fish for Tanner crab during the non-core period must remove all gear from the closed Tanner crab area before registering for Tanner crab.

Golden king crab taken in Tanner crab pots as described in 5 AAC 35.125(f) may be retained if the CFEC permit holder fishing for Tanner crab is also registered to fish for golden king crab and both crab fisheries are open at the same time [5 AAC 34.125(a)]. Permit holders with simultaneous registration in golden king crab and Tanner fisheries are required to comply with inseason reporting requirements in place for the golden king crab fishery, **even if the permit holder begins by targeting Tanner crab.**

### **Logbooks and Reporting Requirements**

Logbooks and inseason reporting are mandatory in the golden king crab fishery [5 AAC 34.130 & 5 AAC 34.143]. Logbook packets include instructions for filling out the logbooks, logbook sheets, envelopes for their delivery, maps showing ADF&G statistical areas, and all pertinent advisory announcements available at the time the packet is obtained. Logbooks should be sealed in one of the envelopes provided in the registration packets and attached to the fish ticket submitted to the processor upon delivery. The number of crabs, pounds, number of pot lifts, and average soak time (hrs) by statistical area must be recorded on logbooks and fish tickets with the exception that average soak time (hrs) is not required for fish tickets. **Each king crab fisherman shall indicate on the fish ticket at the time of landing any king crab harvested that are not purchased by the processor, or that have been discarded at sea [5 AAC 34.075(a)]. Each buyer of king crab shall indicate on the fish ticket any king crab that was not purchased from a load [5 AAC 34.075(b)].** If golden king and Tanner crab are landed on the same trip, separate logbooks must be completed for each species.

For all golden king crab management areas, inseason reporting will be required daily. **The first mandatory call-in for the 2021/2022 season is Friday, February 11, 2022.** If there is no harvest to report on February 11, 2022, report the statistical area in which gear has been set or will be set. This reporting requirement applies to all golden king crab registrants, even if the permit holder begins by targeting Tanner crab. Reporting requirements may be relaxed inseason by emergency order.

Due to changes with phone systems in department offices, the dedicated phone line number for reporting crab logbook data is currently unavailable. **The phone line number to use for reporting crab logbook data, and other information on the reporting requirement for crab logbook data, will be addressed in a subsequent advisory announcement to be issued prior to the start of the golden king crab fishery.**

### **Retention of Parasitized Golden King Crab**

Golden king crabs that are infected with the barnacle parasite, *Briarosaccus callosus*, may be retained regardless of size or sex [5 AAC 34.112]. Either a scar or the externa of the parasite located under the abdominal flap indicates the presence of this parasite. The scar is a dark brown or black spot about ¼ inch in diameter on the soft tissue of the abdominal flap. The externa varies in size, is shaped like a hot dog, and is usually attached to the soft tissue of the abdominal flap. It is possible to have more than one scar or externa on the same crab. The parasite's externa must be removed before the crab is placed into the vessel holding tank.

### **Golden King Crab Fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**

A commissioner's permit is required to fish golden king crab from 3–200 miles in the EEZ. The required commissioner's permit may specify season dates, pot limits, and areas of fishing operations. The commissioner's permit will require a detailed logbook for fishing operations and may require observer coverage and other conditions deemed necessary for conservation and management purposes [5 AAC 34.116]. For more information on fishing in the EEZ contact shellfish regional staff in the Douglas or Petersburg area offices.

### **Lost Pots**

Reporting of lost pots or pots left in a closed area in fishing condition should be directed to the Alaska Wildlife Troopers (AWT) offices in Juneau (907-465-4000) or Ketchikan (907-225-5118).

**Other Requirements and Information**

**Fishermen with gear in more than one fishery area are asked to make every effort to separate crab in their hold so crab can be sampled by department port sampling staff.** Zip ties to mark crab are available to permit holders to assist with dockside sampling efforts. For more information on obtaining zip ties and separating crab by fishery area please contact shellfish regional staff in the Douglas or Petersburg area offices.

Fishermen are also reminded that weather delay criteria for Tanner and king crab fisheries have been adopted in regulation. Any delay to the start of the 2021/2022 Tanner and golden king crab fisheries due to weather will be announced 24 hours before the start of the fisheries [5 AAC 35.110(b) and 34.110(f)].

A person or vessel that operates pots or ring nets for commercial, subsistence, personal use, or sport purposes during the 30 days immediately before the scheduled opening date of the commercial fishery may not participate in that king crab fishery [5 AAC 34.128(a)]. This prohibition does not apply to the operation of commercial shrimp or Dungeness crab pots [5 AAC 34.128 (b)]. Fishermen are reminded to review gear storage requirements and other pertinent regulations in the 2020-2021 Statewide King and Tanner Crab Commercial Fishing Regulations booklet.

Fishermen are reminded to account for any groundfish taken for bait prior to or during the golden king crab fishery. Groundfish harvested for bait should be marked as disposition code 92, landed catch, on the crab fish ticket for the trip on which the bait was taken. Sablefish, halibut, lingcod, thornyhead, shortraker, rougheye, and yelloweye rockfish may not be taken or used for bait, except that the head, tail, fins, closely trimmed skeleton and viscera of delivered or processed commercial sablefish, lingcod, thornyhead, shortraker, rougheye, and yelloweye rockfish may be used for bait [5 AAC 28.190].

The Emergency Orders corresponding with this announcement are EO 1C0322 and EO 1C0422.

Under Alaska's Health Advisories 1, 2, 3, and 4, commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Advisories. COVID-19 Health Advisories may be found here: <https://covid19.alaska.gov/health-advisories/>.

Advisory Announcement web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

<i>Office</i>	<i>Ketchikan</i>	<i>Petersburg</i>	<i>Wrangell</i>	<i>Sitka</i>	<i>Juneau</i>	<i>Haines</i>	<i>Yakutat</i>
<i>ADF&amp;G</i>	225-5195	772-3801		747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
<i>AWT</i>	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3220

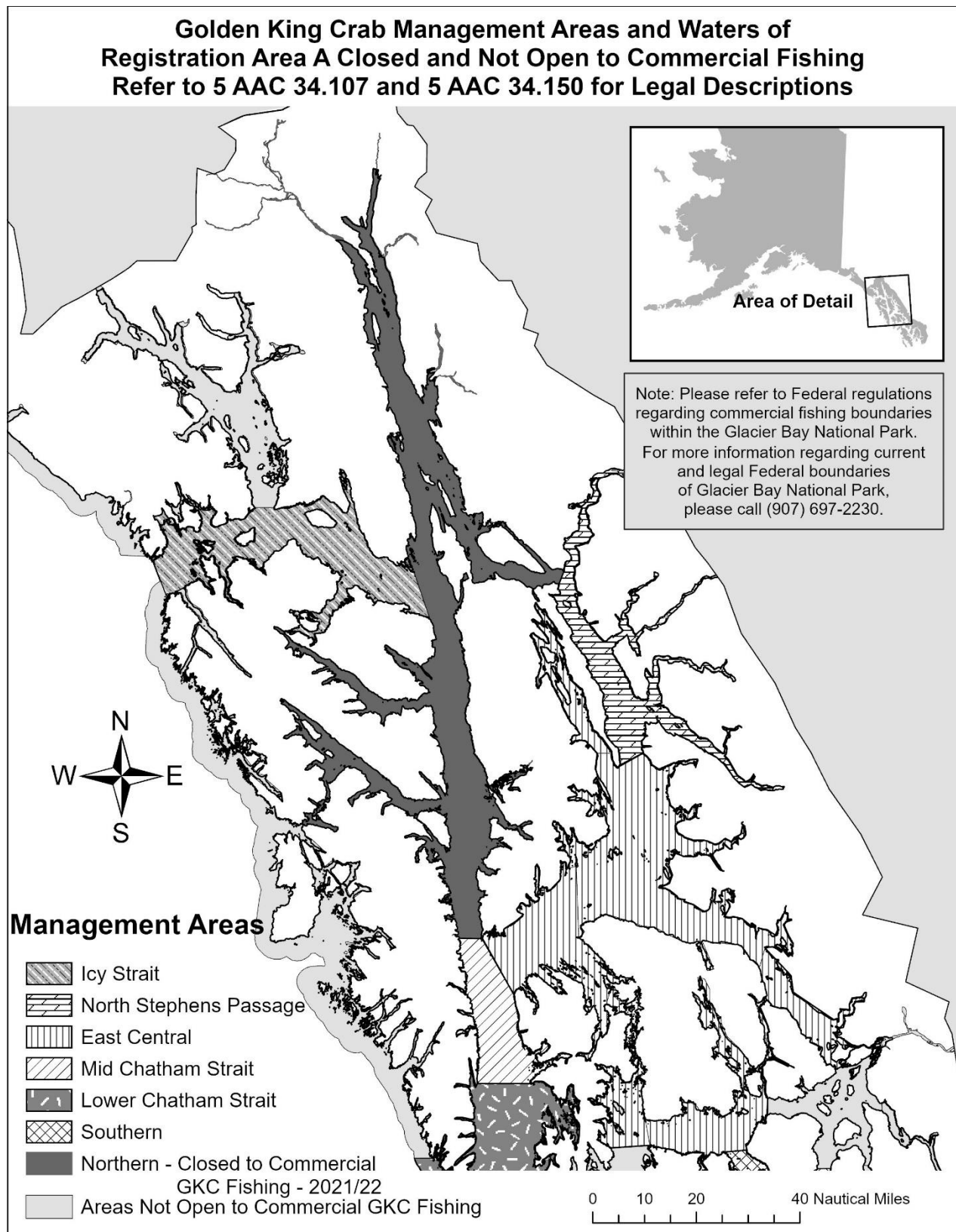


Figure 1. Chart of golden king crab management areas in northern Southeast Alaska. Management area boundaries shown are for general information purposes only and are not intended as legal descriptions. See Closed Waters section in this advisory announcement for more information on Glacier Bay. For specific area boundaries, please refer to written legal descriptions in 5 AAC 34.107.

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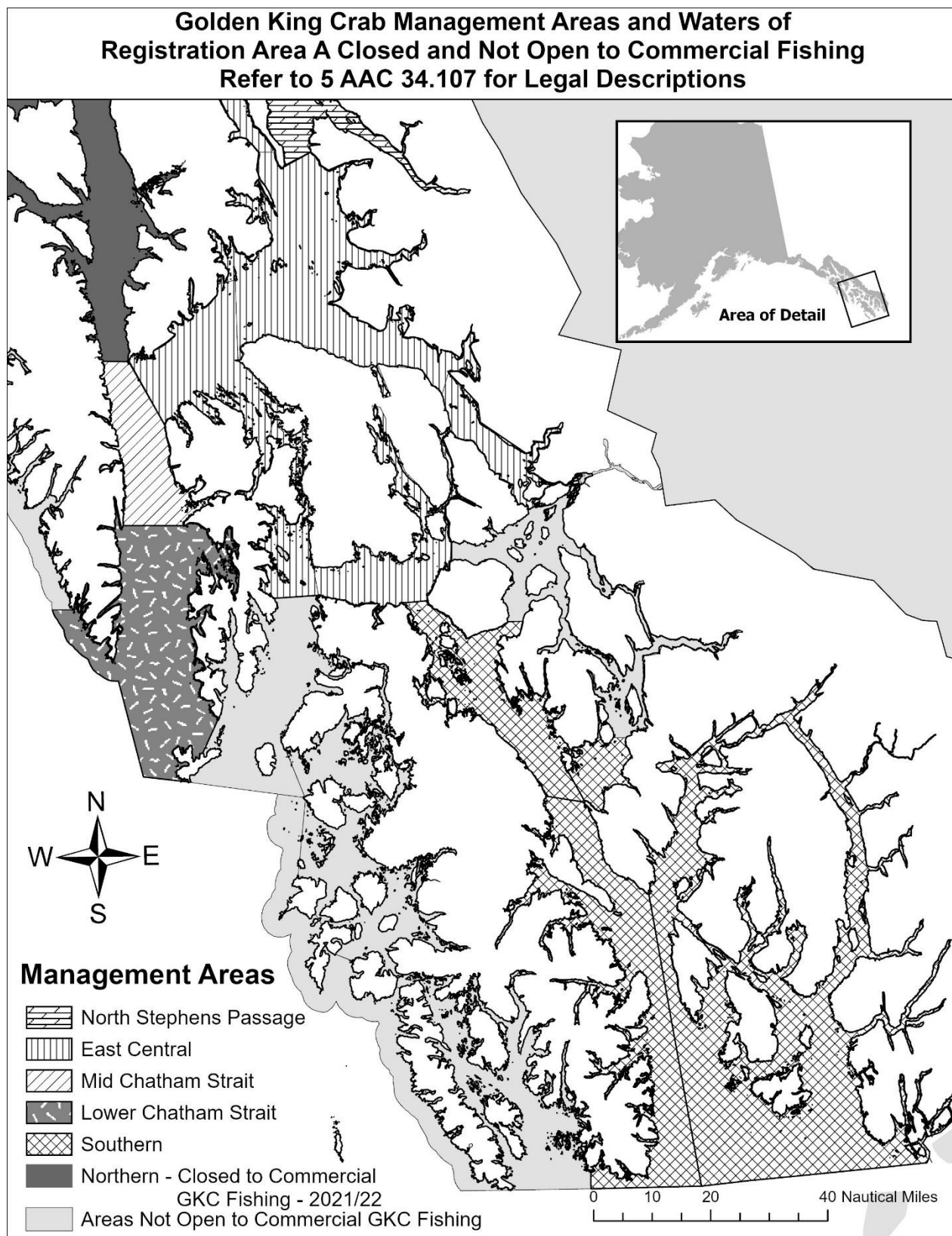


Figure 2. Chart of golden king crab management areas in southern Southeast Alaska. Management area boundaries shown are for general information purposes only and are not intended as legal descriptions. For specific area boundaries, please refer to written legal descriptions in 5 AAC 34.107.